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A Brief Account  
of  
Woodbury Creek Dam



By  
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Woodbury, N. J.

Entered by  
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# Woodbury Creek Dam

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Historical Society.

The ancient Indian name of Woodberry Creek, as it is spelled in our earliest records, meant the place of black burrs (Peskozackassing). It would not require much imagination to infer that wood berries and black burrs were one and the same thing. It has also been suggested that Woodbury was named after Woodbury, Connecticut, but the commonly accepted tradition is that an early settler, Henry Wood, senior of Bury, County of Lancaster, England, who with his sons bought land of Bylling, April 3, 1683, and who settled at the mouth of Woodbury Creek soon afterwards, is responsible for the name now perpetuated by the City of Woodbury, and the famous creek over which there has been so much contention.

Samuel Mickle, of Woodbury, who kept a wonderful diary of the years 1792 to 1829, recorded on December 26, 1820, that he "read after candle light ye manuscript papers respecting ye wars about Woodbury Dam in 1754." Unfortunately, these manuscript papers are now missing, but they, without a doubt, belonged to his uncle, John Ladd, Jr., whose papers he then had.

In the September 1754 sealing in doekets of the Gloucester County Courts, we find the entry of a suit of James Whitall and Joseph Low, versus John Ladd, Fisher Hopper, Habakuk Ward, Joseph Jaggard, Savil Wilson, Thomas Clark, Cornelius Clark, Stephen Clark, James Ward, Joseph Ward, and Moses Ward, Jr. Judging from the facts now before me, I think that this suit had something to do with the so-called Ward Dam that stopped off the waters at the

head of Woodbury Creek, and which interfered somewhat with the plans of Whitall and Low, and others, to dam Woodbury Creek at its mouth. It was very unusual for one Quaker to sue another, and nothing but a defiance of the rules of Friends' Meeting can now be seen in this litigation record.

The bitterness of the contest is reflected in the words, "wars about Woodbury Dam." The following pages show that it was not only a source of conflict then, but continued so for seventy-five years and more.

The dam across the mouth of Woodbury Creek was built about four years prior to the twenty-fourth of April, 1760, when Ann Whitall wrote in her diary: "Hab. Ward and Mos. Ward came here to the dam there has been so much quarreling about, and brought two axes, two mattocks, and two spades to cut the dam down, and to work they went, and Sparks brought the Sheriff, and there was miserable work, but they tied them and took them to Joseph Harrison, and from there to jail." (See Notes on Old Gloucester Co.)

Ann Whitall, afterwards known as the Heroine of Red Bank, lived on the farm where the battle of Red Bank was fought, in a red brick house still standing a few hundred feet north of the bank that dammed Woodbury Creek. Across this dam the Whitalls drove their live stock the day of the battle. After the defeat of the Hessians, Count Donop was taken across the dam to Joseph Low's, and then died in a brick house long since torn down, but the old trees that shaded it still survive, and the prop-

erty is still owned by a descendant named Low.

Benjamin Whitall, the son of Ann, was a captain of artillery. Her brother, John Cooper, was a member of the Provincial Congress of New Jersey, and a delegate to the Continental Congress. His term with the other New Jersey delegates expired a few days before the first of July, 1776, and their successors signed the Declaration of Independence on behalf of the people of New Jersey. He undoubtedly took part in the discussion on the resolution of Richard Henry Lee.

Joseph Low was a member of a patriotic committee, and was disowned by Friends Meeting because of his activities, the same as John Cooper. When I first became interested in Gloucester County history, I often wondered why the British and American troops, both alike, stole from and persecuted the family of James and Ann Whitall. The English knew, of course, about John Cooper and Benjamin Whitall. The Americans knew they were Quakers, and opposed to force. They were truly between the two millstones.

The following advertisement appeared in Franklin's newspaper, the "Pennsylvania Gazette," of June 29, 1758:

Notice is hereby given, That the Petitioners of Woodbury Creek, in the County of Gloucester and Province of West New Jersey, have leave to bring in the Bill they pray for the first Monday of the next sitting of the House of Assembly of said Province at Burlington, for clearing out of said creek above the Dam for keeping the freshets from overflowing the meadows above said Dam, and for maintaining the said dam and waterworks. If any persons have any objections to make, they are desired to offer them. Dated June 5, 1758.

April 24, 1760, an advertisement was printed in the same newspaper by William and Ruth Wood to the effect that on May 7th following, a plantation of the late Henry Woods, situated in the township of Deptford, Gloucester County, N. J., would be offered for sale. The plantation was located about five

miles from Gloucester, and one and one-half miles from Woodbury, and contained a pretty large new brick house, and one hundred acres of the best meadow grounds our country affords, being made dry by stopping a creek where-on it lies.

When the dam was first erected at the mouth of the creek, it was done without the consent of some of the meadow-holders at the very head of the creek. Four years after the bank was erected, and much exertion made to have it taken away by the owners at the head of the creek, both sides appeared before the Legislature. A compromise was made, and all of those at the head of the creek opposed to the dam agreed to accept 100 pounds (one hundred pounds), to be divided among them, and gave up their privileges and opposition to the dam.

The remaining meadow-holders who made the dam owned the principal part of the meadow on the creek, to wit: James Whitall and Joseph Low, who lived directly at the mouth of the creek, together with two or three families of the Woods. The remaining owners agreed and purchased the right to dam the creek, and paid the 100 pounds. On the north side, the meadow was owned by Whitall, Wood and Andrews up to Habakuk Ward, who was one of the men who sold his right for 20 pounds. On the south side, the meadow was owned by the Lows and Woods, parties to the project. They made the dam and supported it.

#### THE FIRST LEGISLATION

The first legislation we find about Woodbury Creek Dam was an act passed in the first year of the reign of King George III (December 5, 1769), entitled "An act to continue the Dam across Woodbury Creek in the County of Gloucester."

"Section 1. Whereas James Whitall, William Wood, John Sparks and others owning and possessing meadows on Woodbury Creek in the County of Gloucester, esteeming it for their interest, did erect a dam across the said creek from the land of Benjamin Wait

to the land of the said James Whitall, whereby the navigation of the said creek became and still remains obstructed, as alleged to the great damage of Moses Ward, Habbakuk Ward, James Ward, and other persons which has occasioned much controversy."

This act, which was very voluminous, gives the idea that the dam was built without process of law, and that it worked damage to owners of meadow land further up the creek where the Wards had erected a dam years before. The Legislative act specified a committee of John Wetherill, Andrew Smyth, John Hart, Joseph Skeleton, Azariah Hunt, William Lowrie, and John Anderson, of Freehold, or any four of them, to assess benefits and damages in case those interested in the contention did not select seven arbitrators to agree on a settlement.

Section 2 of the act required the settlement or assessment to be filed in the office of the Clerk of the Supreme Court at Burlington.

Section 6 provided that Whitall, Wood and Sparks should remove the dam if they were opposed to the award of the arbitrators.

Section 9 said it was the true design of the act to put a final end to the many disputes that had and still existed.

Section 10 gave the right for the owners of meadow land between Woodbury Creek dam and the Wards dam to meet yearly the first Monday in September at the dwelling house of Joseph Tatham, and appoint managers and an assessor to repair, maintain and uphold Woodbury Creek Dam.

This act designed to cover every little detail that might arise after its passage, as usual with such attempts, did not fully answer the purpose, because a few years later, May 10, 1768, another act was passed to remedy the defects in the first act. The second act provided for a concern henceforth to be called the Lower Meadows Co., owning meadows and swamps below Moses Ward's dam on Woodbury Creek, so far as the tide used to flow. This Company was to meet yearly in March and elect two

overseers, two managers, and a clerk, and an assessor to regulate the meadows for the common good of the owners. James Whitall and Joseph Low were appointed first managers; James Cooper and John Wood overseers; John Esttaugh Hopkins assessor, and James Whitall, Clerk, who was to provide himself with a book wherein entries should be made and minutes kept of all meetings of the Company. Mr. John G. Whitall told me that he at one time had these books. It is hoped they will be found and deposited with the Gloucester County Historical Society. The second act repealed the first one, and gave permission to erect flood gates at or near Ward's dam, and in Tredway's branch at or where the public road from Woodbury to the Delaware River crossed it. The flood gates were to be so made as to prevent the tide waters from flowing up the creek and branch, but not so as to prevent a free passage for the backwater through them. It is the idea of John G. Whitall that the flood gates here and at the mouth of Woodbury Creek swung on hinges, or their equivalent.

The Meadows above Ward's dam were evidently known as the Upper Meadow Co., and it is probable they obtained a right to dam the creek before the year 1760, because their rights were specifically protected as follows: "Provided always that nothing herein contained shall divest the owners and possessors of the meadows on the head of said creek of any power or authority they had or enjoyed before the passing of this act," etc.

Samuel Mickle wrote in his diary under date of August 6, 1813, that he "on invitation of James Saunders, went ye P. M. with him and his son, Isaac, fishing at Woodbury Dam. I caught but three small oldwives."

#### TIDE WATER LEVELS

On January 26, 1828, Amos Campbell, James Sterling, Joseph Scott and Ephraim Miller certified that in the month of February, 1824, the tide water

from the river Delaware was let into Woodbury Creek in consequence of a breach or breaches in the river bank—that at high tide, the water rose at the town of Woodbury so as to overflow the top of the arch of the old stone bridge across said creek a few rods below the main road or street. That so long as the tide continued to ebb and flow in the said creek, the arch as aforesaid was overflowed at high tide, and that being citizens of Woodbury, residing near the creek, they had daily observation of the fact.

On the same day, two of them, viz.: Amos Campbell and James Sterling, both architects of Woodbury, certified that they had measured the height of the arch of the old stone bridge across Woodbury Creek a few rods below the then main road, and that from the surface of the water, as it then was, to the top of the arch, the height was three feet eleven inches, and that the present depth of water at the said bridge was three feet, so that whenever the water was high enough to overflow the said arch, the depth of the water in the creek would be six feet eleven inches.

While the contest was on concerning the Woodbury Creek dam, it is of interest to mention that a scheme was on foot to dam the Delaware River above Trenton, which was objected to by the shad fishermen.

February 4, 1828, William Strickland, of Philadelphia, wrote the following letter to Messrs. James Matlock, Glover Smallwood, Foster and Armstrong, Committee on the Navigation of Woodbury Creek:

"At your request, I have examined the ground along the margin of Woodbury Creek from the Dam at its mouth, up to the stone bridge at the town of Woodbury.

I find from a course of levels taken, a copy of which accompanies this report, that by raising an embankment on each side of the creek, the average height of which may not be more than 4 feet 9 inches above the surface of the meadows, the high water of the river Delaware may be made to flow at the town of Woodbury to the depth of 5½ feet,

and that it will be quite easy and practicable by clearing out the bed of the creek to produce a good navigation to the town for sloops and small craft of every description."

The act to restore navigation of Woodbury Creek under that title was passed by the Legislature at Trenton, February 12, 1829. On May 13th, of that year, and for one year afterward, and possibly longer, James Matlock, Jacob Glover and Ephraim Miller, Commissioners, ran an advertisement in the "Village Herald," a weekly newspaper of Woodbury, to the effect that in accordance with the legislative act to restore navigation from Woodbury to the Delaware River, that at 10 o'clock A. M. on April 1, 1831, they would proceed to cut, remove and clear away the dam at or near the mouth of said creek, and let in the tide to make it navigable.

The dam was cut, and it was not long before there was a clamor to have the dam replaced, which, if anything, was more vociferous than that to have it destroyed.

#### EFFORTS TO REPLACE THE DAM

A short time ago, Miss Elizabeth Matlack presented me with some legal papers that belonged to her grandfather, James Matlock, that shed some light on what actually happened after the dam was cut, and the meadows covered with tide water as they are to-day.

Accompanying the papers is a map showing every house near Woodbury Creek, west of Broad street. On the north side, in the vicinity of the present home of Dr. Underwood, was M Callas; then going toward the river were Wm. R. Tatum's, Andrews', and Wilkins'. On the dam road north side of the creek, opposite the tavern and ferry, was a building unnamed.

On the south side of the creek, going to the river, are marked the Court House, George Mickle's, William Cooper's, Joseph Stokes', Thomas Clark's; across the road from it was James Mickle's, and below him at the corner formed by the intersection of the



Woodbury Dam and the Pivot Bridge, or Crown Point Road, was a house marked Osborne's; across the road towards the creek was Amos Campbell's; below it a house lately owned by Jeremiah Wood; further down Low's house. On the road leading from the north side of the dam are the houses marked Tacy Whitall, Charles Whitall, James Jessup, and Snowden around the hook in the Red Bank road, and west of the Crown Point road was the house of Ann Roe, directly north of the Wilkins' house. The various owners of the meadow lands are enumerated, but would now add nothing of interest. The ferry house located on the river side of the dam and south side of the creek, and the unnamed building opposite have long since disappeared. Probably some reader of this article may be able to tell us how long ago.

On the map of the creek, forty-five chains from the west side of the road, about in front of the contemplated post-office building, another "Old Dam" is marked, but no reference is made to it in the papers—probably Ward's Dam. A proposed dam is marked on the map about four or five chains up the creek to the eastward of the Camden-Crown Point Road, or what is now known as Paulsboro Road. The proposed dam was about one half way in a straight line between the former dam at the mouth of the creek and the present Broad street.

#### PETITION TO LEGISLATURE

To the Honorable, the Legislative Council and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey.

The Subscribers, residents of the County of Gloucester, and State aforesaid, respectfully sheweth:

That some of your petitioners with others for the purpose of improving the meadows on Woodbury Creek, and to restore the navigation thereof, applied to the Legislature of the State aforesaid in the year 1829 for a law appointing commissioners to remove the Dam and Water-works at the mouth of said creek; that in pursuance of the law then passed, the said Dam and Water-works were re-

moved in the month of May, 1831. But most unfortunately for your petitioners, and the surrounding neighborhood, five hundred acres of good meadow ground became inundated with water, and rendered entirely useless to the owners, and as many as four hundred acres more lessened in value about one half. Nearly three years have elapsed since the removing of the said Dam, and the continual overflow of the tide over the meadows.

Your petitioners are well assured that the greater part of the meadows bounding upon said creek are forever lost to the owners unless a dam and water-works be again established by law, at or near the place where the old law placed them.

Your petitioners are further convinced that in consequence of the current of water having left the channel of the creek, and spread itself over the surface of the meadow, the creek will continue to fill up and the navigation become useless.

Your petitioners would further beg leave to state that the aforesaid creek having remained banked off for more than seventy years had become filled with mud, and the meadow settled so low that it is impossible to restore them to their former value without resorting to the mode adopted by our forefathers.

Your petitioners therefore sincerely pray that your Honorable Bodies will be pleased to pass a law authorizing them to erect a Dam and water-works at or near the mouth of the creek aforesaid, and your petitioners will ever pray.

Dated at Deptford Township, November 20, 1833.

Joseph Stokes	Paul Bowers
Benj. C. Tatem	Wm. D. Richards
Samuel R. Saunters	Joel D. Lawrance
Zaccheus Duncan	Peter Snyder
Thomas Schumo	Michael Aires
Benjamin Wilkins	Joshua Mullen
Joseph Doron	Daniel Lamb
Joseph Dilkes	James W. Lamb
Joseph Shuster	John W. Lamb
Charles Knight	David Rose, Jr.
I. Cheeseman, Jr.	James Matlack
Joseph Curtis	Aaron M. Wilkins
Sam Webster	Job W. Wilkins
Henry Osborn	Aaron Paul
Thomas Willson	William Cooper
Benjamin Cloud	Thos. Clark
Charles Roe	James J. Lord
Jos. Lodge, Jr.	Thomas Glover
Joseph D. Pedrick	Geo. M. Paul
David B. Leslie	George Ward
David Carney	Natlan Cozens, Jr.

Mahlon Skill  
 Wm. Carson  
 Isaac Cheeseman  
 Isaac Doughten  
 Sam'l B. Lippincott  
 Wm. S. Doughten  
 Josiah Stokes  
 Thos. Knight  
 Wm. E. Kay  
 Henry Bradshaw  
 Benj. B. Shuster  
 Chas. F. Wilkins  
 Levin Deniten  
 Sam'l Kemble  
 S. Sailor  
 Wm. Porch  
 John Estell  
 John Godfrey  
 Chas. French, Jr.  
 William Haines  
 Artlur Brown  
 William C. Sparks  
 Joseph Willson  
 Henry Jackson  
 James Cooper  
 William E. Cooper  
 Richard M. Cooper  
 Charles Kaighn  
 Ebenezer Toole  
 Wm. R. Kaighn  
 George P. Bender  
 John Thorne  
 Benjamin Allen  
 Ephraim Bee  
 Nathaniel Chew  
 Joseph Shernir  
 Joseph Johnson  
 Joel Wood  
 James Graham  
 Marmaduke Beckley  
 Jos. T. Takereen  
 Jonathan Packer  
 Thomas S. Dyos  
 Jesse C. Cox  
 Levi C. Campbell  
 Cornelius Boys  
 Handel Nicholson  
 Sam'l W. Estlock  
 Joseph W. Paul  
 Thomas Thomson  
 Champneys Rambo  
 Dan'l C. Cozens  
 Isaac Thomson, Jr.  
 Eli Thomson  
 George Bowers  
 Wm. Fenimore  
 Elias England  
 Asher Borden  
 Jeremiah Adams  
 Jonathan Heritage  
 Richard Moffett, Jr.  
 Joseph Henry  
 James Jaggard  
 Peter S. Kerns  
 Malachi H. Lodge  
 C. V. Clark  
 William Mickle  
 Thomas Ford  
 Isaac H. Wood  
 Jeh. Wood  
 John S. Lord  
 Isaac Derickson  
 Charles Lock  
 Elijah Bowen  
 Philby E. M.  
 Richard Scull  
 Joseph J. West  
 Peter Hews  
 Joel Parker  
 Garrot Clark  
 David Wood  
 James Jessup, Jr.  
 Wm. Madora  
 Isaac Warner  
 John Hews  
 David Whitall  
 Mark Clements  
 Peter Sigars  
 Joshua Lord  
 Theophilus Hillman  
 John Kerns  
 Bowman Sailer  
 Charles Brown  
 Sam'l R. Chardon  
 William Murphy  
 John R. Tonkin  
 Wm. Thorne  
 John B. Hilyard  
 Charles Hopkins  
 John Brown  
 Joseph Kaighn  
 I. C. Dilkes  
 Jones Keen  
 Benj. Whitall  
 Samuel Kirby  
 John L. Cooper  
 Amos Clark  
 Charles Reeves  
 Edmund Wettlerby  
 John B. Jessup  
 Charles Fisher  
 Benjamin Perkins  
 Josiah R. Andrews  
 Stille Chew  
 Thomas Russell  
 Remlin Haines  
 John W. Cloud  
 Charles R. Cloud  
 Robert Howey  
 Joseph Skill  
 James Saunders, Jr.  
 Benj. W. Mickle  
 T. C. Humphreys  
 Richard Clark  
 Joshua E. Webster  
 W. C. Pifer  
 George Loudenslager  
 Sam'l K. Chardon  
 John Lord  
 Benh. D. Andrews  
 Benjamin Lord  
 James H. Lord  
 Isaac Lord  
 Wesley Miller  
 Joseph J. Currie  
 John M. Richards  
 William Caffrey  
 Joshua Cozens  
 Wm. Stevenson  
 Geo. T. Atkinson  
 Nathan Polwell  
 Thomas Iredell  
 Jonathan Colson  
 Samuel Weatherby  
 Samuel Gaunt  
 Amasa Garwood  
 P. Ferriman Leddon  
 Jesse Rice

Enoch Aggings  
 Abel Knight  
 Martin W. Rulou  
 Charles Starr  
 John Peters  
 James Horner  
 John S. Leonard  
 Jacob Seeds  
 Jacob Sigars  
 Jos. C. Panceast  
 John Shivers  
 Jonathan Colson, Jr.  
 Thomas Hardikin  
 Benjamin Colson  
 Clalkley Moore  
 Charles Wilkins  
 D. C. Ogden  
 Abel Peterson  
 Jacob Howey  
 Samuel Ogden  
 Samuel C. Allen  
 John B. Snode  
 Jos. Fullerton, Jr.  
 Felix Smith  
 Enoch Allen  
 Joshua Engle  
 Jeshiah Lippincott  
 Joseph Chatham  
 Israel Panceast  
 John Atkinson  
 Samuel Atkinson

Apparently nothing resulted from the attempt to again dam Woodbury Creek at its mouth. I consider it quite probable that the petition was presented to the Legislature, but it is evident that objection was made, because the following year another petition was circulated and generously signed, asking for a dam about half way up the creek between the river and Woodbury. The map described probably accompanied this petition.

#### ANOTHER PETITION

To the Honorable, the Legislative Council and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey. The Petitioners of the Inhabitants of the County of Gloucester respectfully sheweth:

That near four years hath elapsed since the dam and water works at the mouth of Woodbury Creek was removed for the restoring the navigation of the said creek, and for the improvement of the meadow thereon, but in consequence of such removal five hundred acres of meadow are destroyed, and the navigation of the upper part of the creek of but little advantage compared with the entire loss of the meadow.

Your Petitioners therefor pray a law may be passed authorizing commissioners to erect a dam and water works on said creek where the Crown Point Road crosses the same. Your Petitioners will ever pray.

12th, 12mo., 1834.

David B. Cooper  
 Paul Cooper  
 James Matlack  
 Josiah R. Andrews  
 Isaac Cheesman, Jr.  
 John B. Jessup  
 Charles Stokes  
 Sam'l Webster  
 Thos. Clark  
 Samuel Ogden  
 David Cooper  
 Samuel Kemble  
 Joseph Ogden  
 Joseph D. Pedrick  
 Geo. M. Paul  
 Nathan Cozens, Jr.  
 Jesse Smith  
 Nicholas Pidgeon  
 Thomas Glover  
 John Redfield

William Scott  
James Jessup, Jr.  
Thomas Russell  
George Allen  
Elijah Chew  
John G. Shivers  
Benjamin Madara  
Thomas Keough  
Michael Morgan  
Benj. Wilkins  
Thomas Ford  
Isaac Hinchman  
W. E. Cooper  
Gabriel Davis  
Joseph Stokes  
James Mickle  
Wm. Cooper  
Benh. D. Andrews  
James Dilks  
James H. Lord  
Amos Campbell  
Jno. R. Sickler  
C. V. Clark  
John Mickle  
Thos. Schumo  
Joseph Biddle  
David Whitall  
Thomas Madara  
Aaron M. Wilkins  
Firman Layman  
William Heppard, Jr.  
James Hinchman  
B. P. Lippincott  
Benjamin Perkins  
Zebulon Pierson  
Richard Fetters  
Charles Reeves  
Philip Emmel  
Richard Scull  
Arthur Brown  
William Haines  
Abraham Lippincott  
Bowman Sailer  
Francis Carson  
Thos. L. Sharp  
Abel Knight  
Jacob Wilkins  
Joshua E. Campbell  
John B. Hilyard  
Joseph M. Cooper  
Chas. F. Wilkins  
Sam M. Stephens  
Robert Cooper  
John Bud  
Peter Curtis

Charles Whitall  
William R. Tatam  
James Roe  
Josiah Lippincott  
Felix Smith  
William Elkins  
Reuben M. Stiles  
James Gibson  
Joseph Ashbrook  
David Jaggard  
Henry Rulon  
Sam'l C. Allen  
Joseph A. Chatham  
Joseph Chatham  
Sam'l A. Coles  
Enoch Aggings  
Richard Matlack  
Joseph Doron  
Joseph C. Pancoast  
Jesse Rice  
Stacy French  
George Ward  
Charles Brown  
Ameriah Pierce  
Thomas Doron  
Amaza Garwood  
Martin W. Rulon  
Sam'l H. Weatherby  
William Ward  
Thomas Sailer  
Pemmimeno Leddree  
Jacob G. Turner  
Nathan T. Stratton  
William Holmes  
Edward Wallace  
Charles Wilkins  
John Moore  
Joel Packer  
Jonathan Colson  
Robert Davis  
Peter Stetser  
Henry Bart  
Job W. Wilkins  
Charles Stetser  
Joseph L. Stechens  
Tobias Casperson  
Sam'l Whoto  
Isaac Howes  
Henry Osborn  
Henry Osborn, Jr.  
William Wilkins  
Aron Wallace  
Richard Parker  
Joseph Willson  
James Cox

On November 25, 1834, according to George E. Pierson, an advertisement was placed in the "Woodbury Constitution" signed by George Mickle, Charles Knight, James Mickle, Josiah R. Andrews, James Matlack, Thomas Clark, William Cooper, Joseph Stokes and Isaac Cheeseman to the effect that a petition would be made to the Legislature on January 14, 1835, for a law appointing commissioners to erect a dam and water works on Woodbury Creek between the pivot bridge on the Crown Point Road, and the mouth

of Matthews' branch. The proposed location corresponds with the spot on the map referred to before, but the Legislature did not look on the proposition with favor, and no action was taken. A few years ago Woodbury Creek was deepened and straightened, and its waters ebb and flow twice in every twenty-four hours as they did when Hog Island, on the opposite side of the Delaware, was called Quistoneck.

Accompanying the petition is a statement to the New Jersey Legislature signed by the owners of the meadows lying on Woodbury Creek who were citizens of Gloucester County. They were Wm. Cooper, James Matlack, Charles Knight, Thomas Clark, Joseph Stokes, James Mickle, Aaron M. Wilkins, Zachariah Duran, Benjamin Cloud, Josiah R. Andrews, Charles Whitall, Henry Osborn, Isaac Cheesman, Jr., Joseph Shuster, James Jessup, and Benjamin Lord. The statement itemized the different estimated losses such as crops, taxes, embankment expenses, causeway losses that amounted to four thousand dollars annually.

Another list gives the names of thirty-one owners of meadow land on Woodbury Creek, and its branches, aggregating four hundred and fourteen and one-half acres overflowed by the tide.

From a memorandum, we find that Samuel Webster was County Collector.

John Mickle, boat builder.  
Thomas Schumo, watchmaker.  
John R. Sickler, physician  
Joseph D. Pedrick, wheelwright and farmer.

Geo. M. Paul, storekeeper and farmer.  
Jesse Smith, mechanic and weaver.  
Nathan Cozens, tailor.  
Nicholas Pidgeon, shem-maker.  
Thomas Glover, blacksmith.  
Thomas Madara, carpenter and farmer.

James Roe, storekeeper.  
Sam'l Kemble, constable.  
Ephraim Miller, Justice of the Peace.  
Jesse Smith, innkeeper and farmer.  
Joseph Fithian, physician.

Daniel J. Packer, blacksmith and farmer.

John C. Smallwood, County Clerk.

There were apparently two Jesse Smith's living in Woodbury in 1834.

From a recapitulation of the buildings in Woodbury in 1834, we find there were one hundred and three dwellings, thirteen stores and twenty-three offices; printing and work shops, all figured as separate buildings, but probably in most cases on the same lots as the dwellings. The owners of fifty-four of the buildings favored the "stopping" of the creek. The owners of thirty-two buildings were opposed. The owners of twenty-two buildings were neutral or indifferent. Thirty-one buildings were owned by widows and non-residents. Those opposed to the dam were: Ephraim Miller, Daniel J. Packer, Jesse Smith, Josiah S. Franklin, John Simmerman, Simon Sparks, Samuel Cole, Joseph Saunders, Jacob Glover, John Hannah, Joseph Fithian and Joseph Franklin. Those who were indifferent were Joseph Curtis, Michael C. Fisher, Samuel Ladd, John Moore White, Andrew Eacritt, William Fletcher, Samuel Kemble, Samuel Hudson, Martha Saunders, Clement Daniels, Aaron Cade, and John Fletcher.

From the list of property owners, we learn that James Matlack owned more property than any other person in Woodbury, namely six houses, one store, and one shop. Nancy Roe owned four houses, and one store. Joseph Fithian four houses and one shop. Jacob Glover, Thomas Madara, and a person named Dickerson owned three buildings each, and Samuel Webster owned a school house.

In an article read before the Gloucester County Historical Society at Red Bank by John G. Whitall, he said that in 1829 the Legislature passed an act for the removal of the dam, giving the

property owners along the creek two years to erect banks to prevent the tide from overflowing their meadows. The dam was removed in 1831, causing great bitterness on the part of the farmers injured, who for years afterwards refused to trade with Woodbury stores. His own father, Charles G. Whitall, discontinued the professional services of Dr. Fithian, of Woodbury. One of the reasons put forth for the destruction of the dam was that it caused malarial chills and fevers.

In the winter of 1849-50, a high storm tide washed away so much of the lower side of the dam bank that the road leading to Leven Densten's, who kept the tavern, became impassable. He put in a claim for damages because the dam road was not kept up, which was allowed by the township, and the road vacated. The tavern, being below high water mark, was flooded, and soon ruined.

Woodbury dam in its prime was a shipping point for Woodbury twice a week: on Tuesdays and Fridays, packets sailed to Philadelphia. Mr. Whitall remembers an old woman, Mercy Fowler, who grew acres of lavender which she sold in Philadelphia, also other things, on commission for her Thorofare neighbors. John G. Whitall says that Thorofare and vicinity was formerly known as Flyattem town.

January 26, 1828, Samuel Mickle wrote in his diary: "Cousin Josiah Tatum ye P. M. came with a petition or remonstrance against opening ye navigation of Woodbury Creek. Also John Reeve a few days ago presented to me a memorial and petition for opening said navigation, but I signed neither of them. N. B.—In or about ye year 1754, a dam was erected and navigation stopped about which this neighborhood was in a great ferment on the said occasion."



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